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(54) **COMBINING CONTENT WITH A SEARCH RESULT**

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(57)

ABSTRACT

Methods, systems, and apparatus include computer programs encoded on a computer-readable storage medium, including a method for providing content. A search query is received. Search results responsive to the query are identified, including identifying a first search result in a top set of search results that is associated with a brand. Based at least in part on the query, one or more eligible content items are identified for delivery along with the search results responsive to the query. A determination is made as to when at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand as the brand associated with the first search result. The first search result and one of the determined at least one eligible content items are combined into a combined content item and providing the combined content item as a search result responsive to the request.

19 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets

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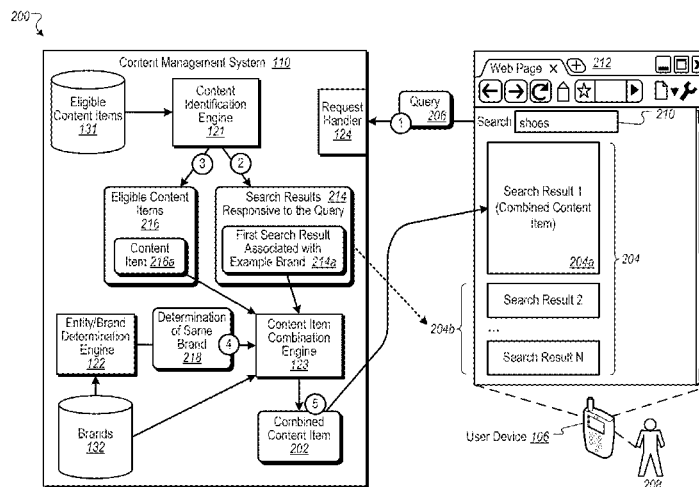
(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **G06Q 30/0241** (2013.01); **G06F 17/30424** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC G06F 17/30424

USPC 707/706, 769

See application file for complete search history.



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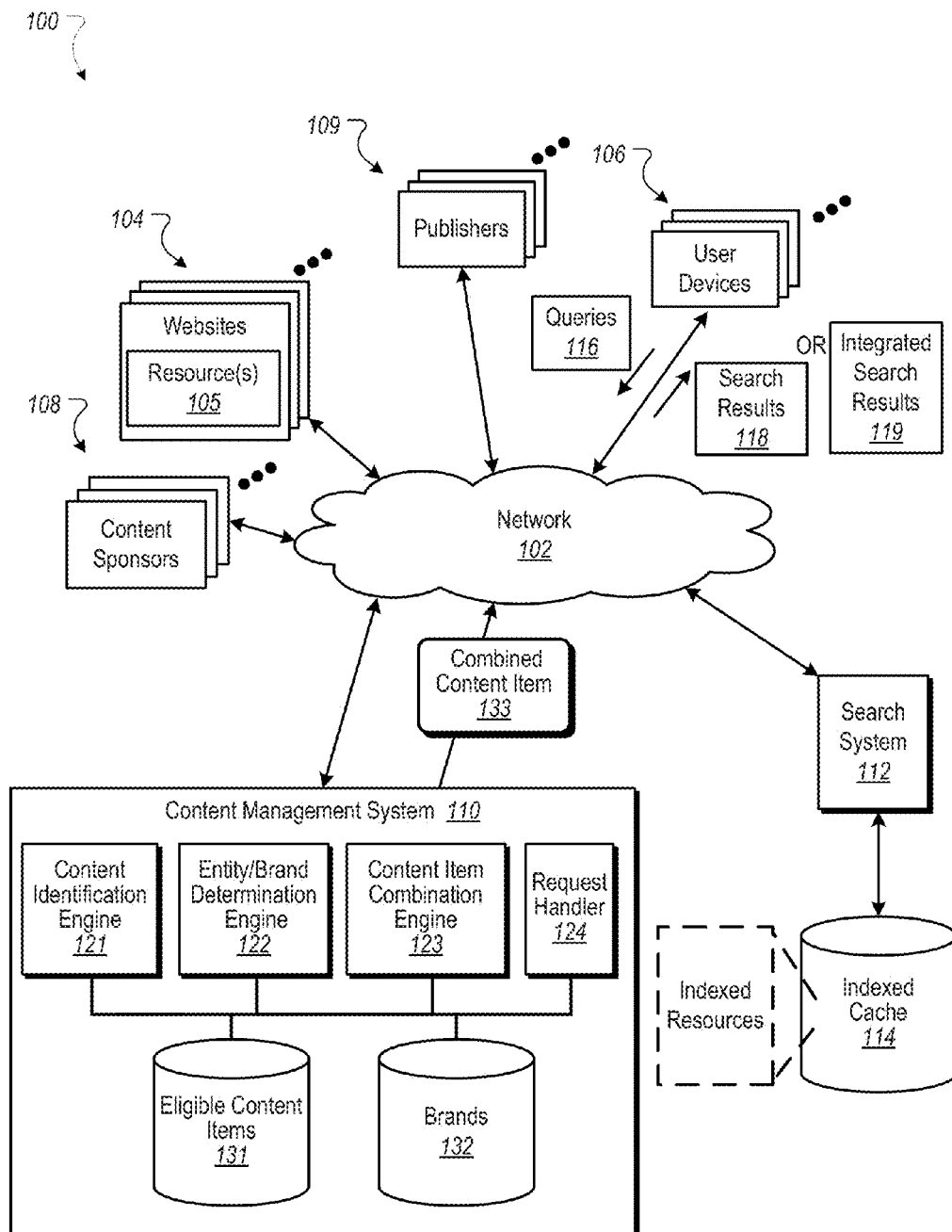
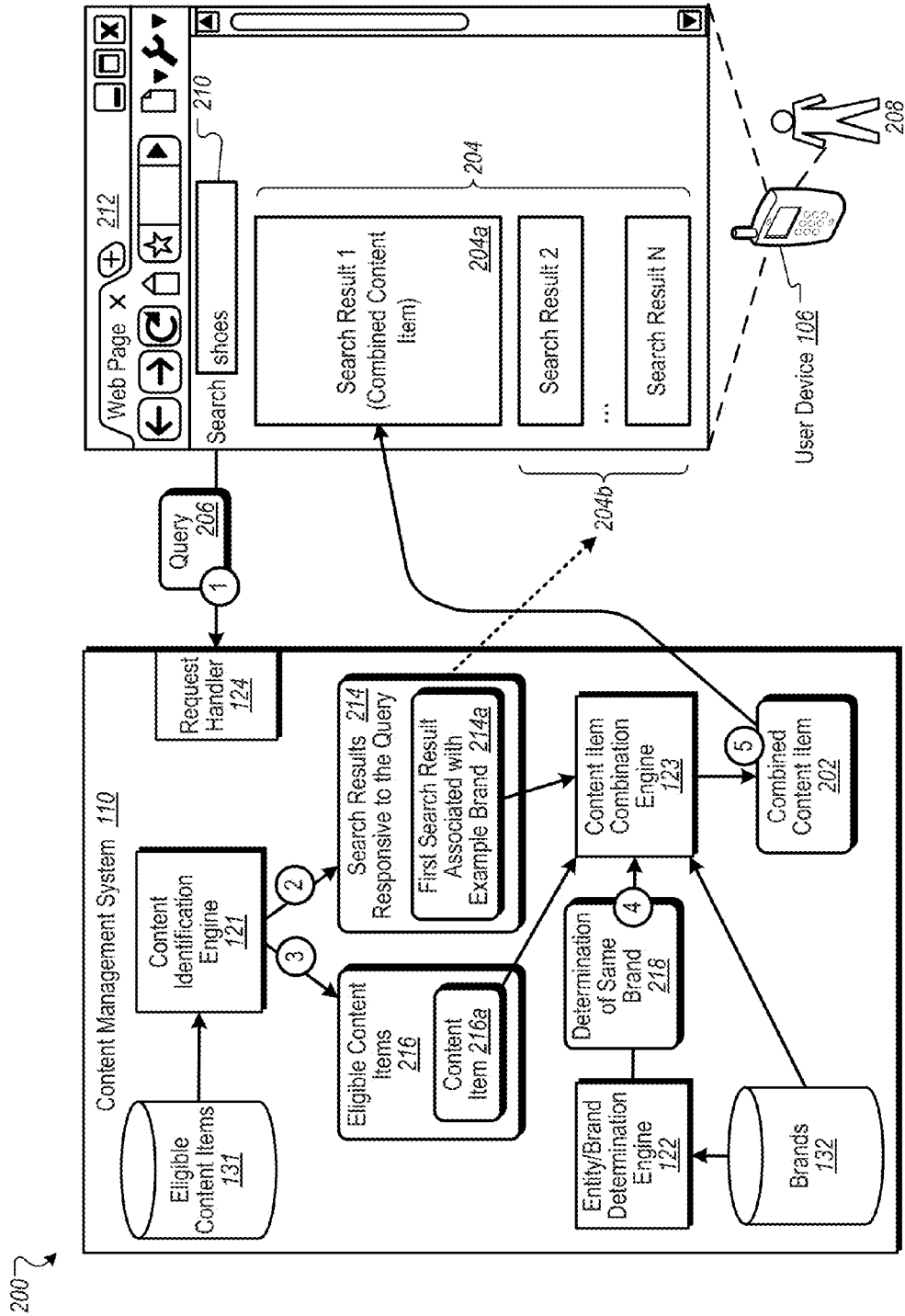


FIG. 1



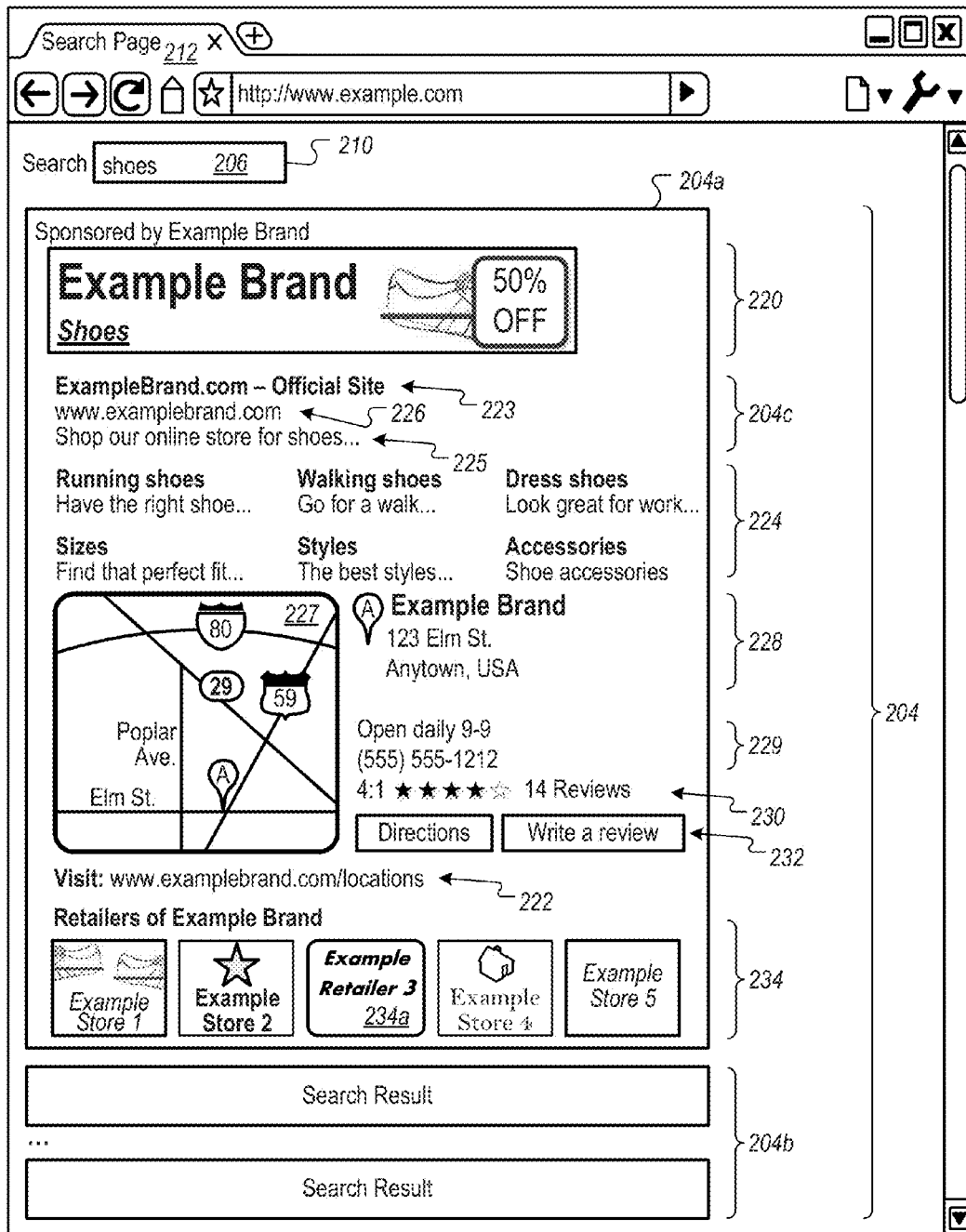


FIG. 2B

300 ↗

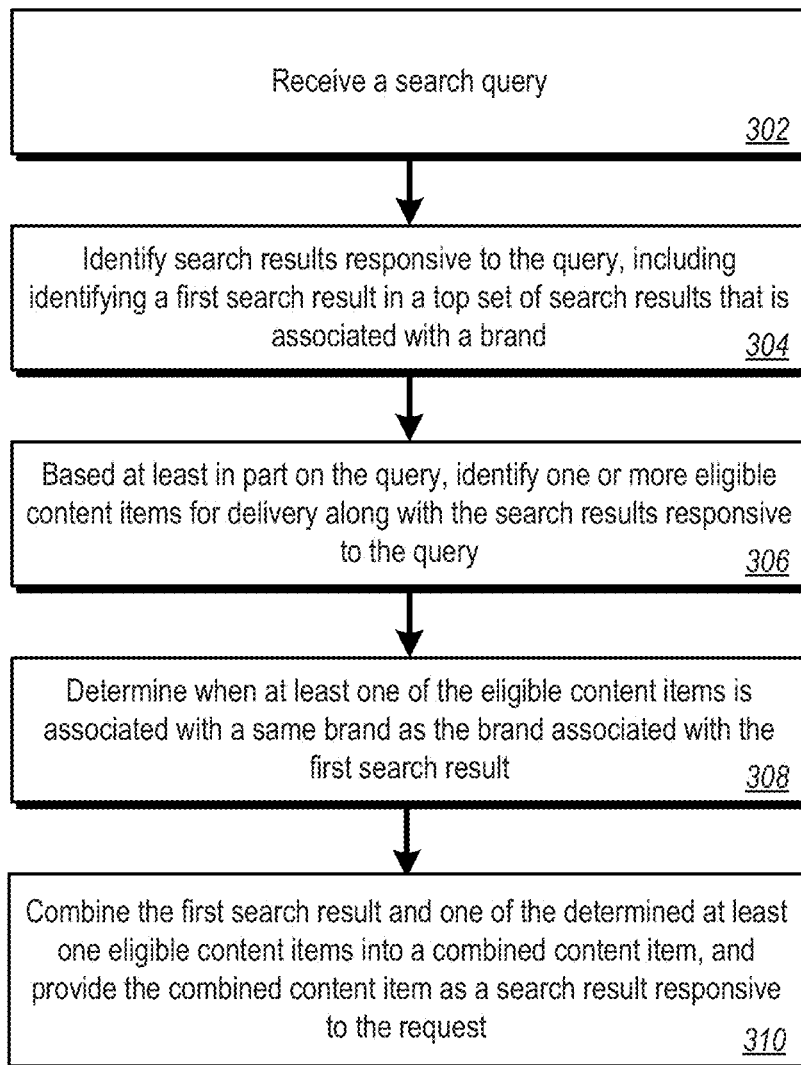


FIG. 3

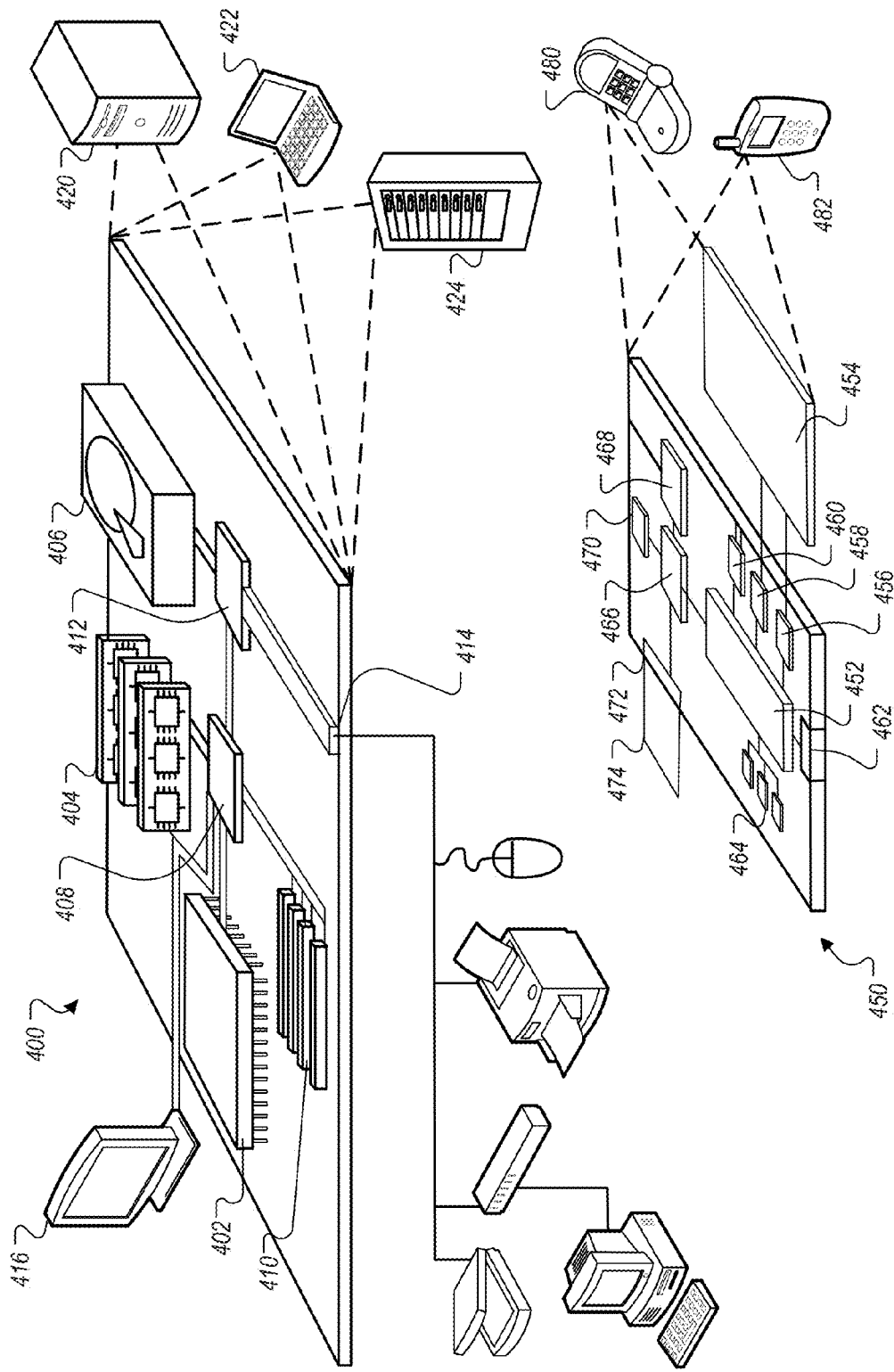


FIG. 4

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COMBINING CONTENT WITH A SEARCH RESULT

BACKGROUND

This specification relates to information presentation.

The Internet provides access to a wide variety of resources. For example, video and/or audio files, as well as webpages for particular subjects or particular news articles, are accessible over the Internet. Access to these resources presents opportunities for other content (e.g., advertisements) to be provided with the resources. For example, a webpage can include slots in which content can be presented. These slots can be defined in the webpage or defined for presentation with a webpage, for example, along with search results.

Content slots can be allocated to content sponsors as part of a reservation system, or in an auction. For example, content sponsors can provide bids specifying amounts that the sponsors are respectively willing to pay for presentation of their content. In turn, an auction can be run, and the slots can be allocated to sponsors according, among other things, to their bids and/or the relevance of the sponsored content to content presented on a page hosting the slot or a request that is received for the sponsored content. The content can be provided to a user device such as a personal computer (PC), a smartphone, a laptop computer, a tablet computer, or some other user device.

SUMMARY

In general, one innovative aspect of the subject matter described in this specification can be implemented in methods that include a computer-implemented method for providing content. The method includes receiving a search query. The method further includes identifying search results responsive to the query, including identifying a first search result in a top set of search results that is associated with a brand. The method further includes, based at least in part on the query, identifying one or more eligible content items for delivery along with the search results responsive to the query. The method further includes determining when at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand as the brand associated with the first search result. The method further includes combining the first search result and one of the determined at least one eligible content items into a combined content item and providing the combined content item as a search result responsive to the request.

These and other implementations can each optionally include one or more of the following features. The first search result can be the top search result. Determining when the at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand can include determining that one content item is sponsored by an owner of the brand. Combining can include combining into a single unit. Combining can include combining a visual universal resource locator (VisURL), a title, text from the determined one eligible content item and a link to a landing page from the determined one eligible content item into the combined content item. The method can further include combining other information associated with the brand in the combination content item. Other information can include a map to retail locations associated with brand retail presence. Other information can include retail location information associated with the brand. The first search result may not be the top result. Determining when at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand can include determining that one eligible content item is associated with a retailer associated with the brand. The method can

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further include designating content from the at least one eligible content item that is included in the combined content item as sponsored content. The method can further include monetizing interactions with material that is included from the at least one eligible content item that is included in the combined content item based on user interactions with the material. The first search result can be associated with the brand by being a product or retailer of the brand. The other information can include an image or logo associated with the brand. The other information can include one or more products associated with the brand. The other information can include additional links associated with the brand. Combining can include combining additional links relevant to the result.

In general, another innovative aspect of the subject matter described in this specification can be implemented in computer program products that include a computer program product tangibly embodied in a computer-readable storage device and comprising instructions. The instructions, when executed by one or more processors, cause the processor to: receive a search query; identify search results responsive to the query, including identifying a first search result in a top set of search results that is associated with a brand; based at least in part on the query, identify one or more eligible content items for delivery along with the search results responsive to the query; determine when at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand as the brand associated with the first search result; and combine the first search result and one of the determined at least one eligible content items into a combined content item and providing the combined content item as a search result responsive to the request.

In general, another innovative aspect of the subject matter described in this specification can be implemented in systems, including a system for providing content. The system includes a content identification engine that evaluates terms and phrases in a received query to identify content responsive to the request. The system further includes an entity/brand determination engine that determines when at least one of the eligible content items identified by the content identification engine is associated with a same entity/brand as the entity/brand associated with the first search result of the search results. The system further includes a content item combination engine that combines a first search result and one of the determined at least one eligible content items into a combined content item. The system further includes a request handler that handles requests for content received by the content management system. The system further includes a request handler that handles requests for content received by a content management system, the content management system selecting and providing content in response to requests for content. The system further includes one or more processors and one or more memory elements including instructions. The instructions, when executed, cause the one or more processors to: receive a search query; identify search results responsive to the query, including identifying a first search result in a top set of search results that is associated with a brand; based at least in part on the query, identify one or more eligible content items for delivery along with the search results responsive to the query; determine when at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand as the brand associated with the first search result; and combine the first search result and one of the determined at least one eligible content items into a combined content item and providing the combined content item as a search result responsive to the request.

These and other implementations can each optionally include one or more of the following features. Determining

when the at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand can include determining that one content item is sponsored by an owner of the brand.

Particular implementations may realize none, one or more of the following advantages. Combined content items (e.g., a combined search result entry) can be automatically created using content from a search result associated with a brand and a content item (e.g., advertisement) associated with the same brand. Users can be presented with a combined content item that may be more interesting because the content item includes content from different sources.

The details of one or more implementations of the subject matter described in this specification are set forth in the accompanying drawings and the description below. Other features, aspects, and advantages of the subject matter will become apparent from the description, the drawings, and the claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of an example environment for delivering content.

FIG. 2A shows an example system for creating a combined content item using information from a content item associated with a same brand.

FIG. 2B shows an example combined content item.

FIG. 3 is a flowchart of an example process for creating a combined content item using information from a content item associated with a same brand.

FIG. 4 is a block diagram of an example computer system that can be used to implement the methods, systems and processes described in this disclosure.

Like reference numbers and designations in the various drawings indicate like elements.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

This document describes systems, methods, computer program products and mechanisms for creating a combined content item that combines content from a search result and a content item that are both associated with the same entity (e.g., brand, sponsor or other entity). For example, the search result can be one of (e.g., the first or top search result in) search results that are provided in response to a query. The content item (e.g., an advertisement) can be selected (based on being associated with the same brand) from one or more eligible content items that are also identified, based at least in part, on a received query. The combined content item that is created can be presented with the search results, e.g. as the first search result.

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of an example environment 100 for delivering content. The example environment 100 includes a content management system 110 for selecting and providing content in response to requests for content. The example environment 100 includes a network 102, such as a local area network (LAN), a wide area network (WAN), the Internet, or a combination thereof. The network 102 connects websites 104, user devices 106, content sponsors 108 (e.g., advertisers), publishers 109, and the content management system 110. The example environment 100 may include many thousands of websites 104, user devices 106, content sponsors 108 and publishers 109.

In some implementations, in response to a request for content (e.g., a search query 116), the content management system 110 can provide a combined content item 133, e.g., as a first search result among the search results 118. The content management system 110 can create the combined content

item 133, for example, by combining a top one of the search results 118 with one of the eligible content items 131 that is associated with a same brand as the top one of the search results 118. In some implementations, a content item associated with a same entity (i.e., not necessarily same brand) can be combined with a search result that is associated with the same respective entity. A more detailed description as to how the combined content item 133 is created is included below.

The content management system 110 can include plural engines. A content identification engine 121, for example, can evaluate terms and phrases in a query (e.g., the search query 116) received by the content management system 110 to identify content responsive to the request. The content can include at least one eligible content item (e.g., from a data store of eligible content items 131, including advertisements) and search results (e.g., search results 118) that are responsive to the query. In some implementations, the content identification engine 121 can also identify a first search result in a top set of search results that is associated with a brand. As an example, there can be several search results, and some search results can be associated with a specific brand. From the top search results that are associated with the brand and that may be ranked highest as being responsive to the search query 116, for example, the content identification engine 121 can select a top, or best matching, search result. The at least one eligible content item that is identified can include content items that are identified for delivery along with the search results 118 that are responsive to the search query 116.

An entity/brand determination engine 122, for example, can determine when at least one of the eligible content items identified by the content identification engine 121 is associated with a same entity/brand as the entity/brand associated with the first (e.g., top) search result of the search results. For example, one or more of the eligible content items 131 can be advertisements for Example Brand shoes, which can be the same brand that is associated with a top one of the search results 118.

A content item combination engine 123, for example, can combine a first search result and one of the determined at least one eligible content items into a combined content item. For example, to create the combined content item 133, the content item combination engine 123 can combine an identified one (e.g., a top-ranked one) of the search results 118 associated with Example Brand with one of the eligible content items 131 that is also associated with the brand (e.g., an advertisement for Example Brand shoes).

A request handler 124, for example, can handle requests for content received by the content management system 110, and in response to each request, provide one or more content items to the requestor. For example, the request for content can be a request to fill a content item slot on a web page displayed in a browser on the user device 106. In response to the request for content, the request handler 124 can provide a content item, e.g., a shoe advertisement having characteristics that match the characteristics of an advertisement slot on the user device 106. A search system 112 can provide initial search results 118 in response to received search queries 116. The request handler 124, for example, can combine one of the search results and one or more content items in response to the received search query 116 to produce integrated search results 119. The integrated search results 119 can include, for example, the combined content item 133 created by the content item combination engine 123. In some implementations, the combining can occur at the content management system 110. In some implementations, the combining can occur at the user device 106, e.g., in a browser.

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The environment **100** can include plural data stores, which can be stored locally by the content management system **110**, stored somewhere else and accessible using the network **102**, generated as needed from various data sources, or some combination thereof. A data store of eligible content items **131**, for example, can include content items (e.g., advertisements) that can be selected by the content management system **110** in response to a content item request, such as a search query **116**. A data store of brands **132**, for example, can include information about brands that can be used (e.g., by the entity/brand determination engine **122**) to determine if different content items are associated with the same brand. The information can include, for example, the name of the brand and any other brand-related indicators, such as brand owner information (e.g., addresses, URLs, phone numbers), model numbers, model names, and other brand-unique and/or brand-identifying information.

In some implementations, content sponsors **108** can be provided with an interface for defining settings for creating combined content items. For example, content sponsors **108** can specify whether or not they want their content items to be combined with a search result and presented to the user as a combined content item. Other settings are possible, such as settings that define the style and/or content of combined content items.

A website **104** includes one or more resources **105** associated with a domain name and hosted by one or more servers. An example website is a collection of webpages formatted in hypertext markup language (HTML) that can contain text, images, multimedia content, and programming elements, such as scripts. Each website **104** can be maintained by a content publisher, which is an entity that controls, manages and/or owns the website **104**.

A resource **105** can be any data that can be provided over the network **102**. A resource **105** can be identified by a resource address that is associated with the resource **105**. Resources include HTML pages, word processing documents, portable document format (PDF) documents, images, video, and news feed sources, to name only a few. The resources can include content, such as words, phrases, images, video and sounds, that may include embedded information (such as meta-information hyperlinks) and/or embedded instructions (such as JavaScript™ scripts).

A user device **106** is an electronic device that is under control of a user and is capable of requesting and receiving resources over the network **102**. Example user devices **106** include personal computers (PCs), televisions with one or more processors embedded therein or coupled thereto, set-top boxes, mobile communication devices (e.g., smartphones), tablet computers and other devices that can send and receive data over the network **102**. A user device **106** typically includes one or more user applications, such as a web browser, to facilitate the sending and receiving of data over the network **102**.

A user device **106** can request resources **105** from a website **104**. In turn, data representing the resource **105** can be provided to the user device **106** for presentation by the user device **106**. The data representing the resource **105** can also include data specifying a portion of the resource or a portion of a user display, such as a presentation location of a pop-up window or a slot of a third-party content site or webpage, in which content can be presented. These specified portions of the resource or user display are referred to as slots (e.g., ad slots).

To facilitate searching of these resources, the environment **100** can include a search system **112** that identifies the resources by crawling and indexing the resources provided by

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the content publishers on the websites **104**. Data about the resources can be indexed based on the resource to which the data corresponds. The indexed and, optionally, cached copies of the resources can be stored in an indexed cache **114**.

User devices **106** can submit search queries **116** to the search system **112** over the network **102**. In response, the search system **112** can, for example, access the indexed cache **114** to identify resources that are relevant to the search query **116**. The search system **112** identifies the resources in the form of search results **118** and returns the search results **118** to the user devices **106** in search results pages. A search result **118** can be data generated by the search system **112** that identifies a resource that is provided in response to a particular search query, and includes a link to the resource. In some implementations, the search results **118** include the content itself, such as a map, or an answer, such as in response to a query for a store's products, phone number, address or hours of operation. In some implementations, the content management system **110** can generate search results **118** using information (e.g., identified resources) received from the search system **112**. An example search result **118** can include a webpage title, a snippet of text or a portion of an image extracted from the webpage, and the URL of the webpage. Search results pages can also include one or more slots in which other content items (e.g., ads) can be presented. In some implementations, slots on search results pages or other webpages can include content slots for content items that have been provided as part of a reservation process. In a reservation process, a publisher and a content item sponsor enter into an agreement where the publisher agrees to publish a given content item (or campaign) in accordance with a schedule (e.g., provide 1000 impressions by date X) or other publication criteria. In some implementations, content items that are selected to fill the requests for content slots can be selected based, at least in part, on priorities associated with a reservation process (e.g., based on urgency to fulfill a reservation). As discussed above, one or more entries from the search results **118** can be combined with one or more eligible content items to create integrated search result **119**. The integrated search result **119** can then be delivered responsive to the received query **116**.

When a resource **105**, search results **118** and/or other content are requested by a user device **106**, the content management system **110** receives a request for content. The request for content can include characteristics of the slots that are defined for the requested resource or search results page, and can be provided to the content management system **110**.

For example, a reference (e.g., URL) to the resource for which the slot is defined, a size of the slot, and/or media types that are available for presentation in the slot can be provided to the content management system **110** in association with a given request. Similarly, keywords associated with a requested resource ("resource keywords") or a search query **116** for which search results are requested can also be provided to the content management system **110** to facilitate identification of content that is relevant to the resource or search query **116**.

Based at least in part on data included in the request, the content management system **110** can select content that is eligible to be provided in response to the request ("eligible content items"). For example, eligible content items can include eligible ads having characteristics matching the characteristics of ad slots and that are identified as relevant to specified resource keywords or search queries **116**. In some implementations, the selection of the eligible content items can further depend on user signals, such as demographic signals and behavioral signals.

The content management system **110** can select from the eligible content items that are to be provided for presentation in slots of a resource or search results page based at least in part on results of an auction (or by some other selection process). For example, for the eligible content items, the content management system **110** can receive offers from content sponsors **108** and allocate the slots, based at least in part on the received offers (e.g., based on the highest bidders at the conclusion of the auction or based on other criteria, such as those related to satisfying open reservations). The offers represent the amounts that the content sponsors are willing to pay for presentation (or selection or other interaction with) of their content with a resource or search results page. For example, an offer can specify an amount that a content sponsor is willing to pay for each 1000 impressions (i.e., presentations) of the content item, referred to as a CPM bid. Alternatively, the offer can specify an amount that the content sponsor is willing to pay (e.g., a cost per engagement) for a selection (i.e., a click-through) of the content item or a conversion following selection of the content item. For example, the selected content item can be determined based on the offers alone, or based on the offers of each content sponsor being multiplied by one or more factors, such as quality scores derived from content performance, landing page scores, and/or other factors.

A conversion can be said to occur when a user performs a particular transaction or action related to a content item provided with a resource or search results page. What constitutes a conversion may vary from case-to-case and can be determined in a variety of ways. For example, a conversion may occur when a user clicks on a content item (e.g., an ad), is referred to a webpage, and consummates a purchase there before leaving that webpage. A conversion can also be defined by a content provider to be any measurable or observable user action, such as downloading a white paper, navigating to at least a given depth of a website, viewing at least a certain number of webpages, spending at least a predetermined amount of time on a website or webpage, registering on a website, experiencing media, or performing a social action regarding a content item (e.g., an ad), such as republishing or sharing the content item. Other actions that constitute a conversion can also be used.

In some implementations, conversions may be more likely to occur, for example, when a user is presented with a content item that is a combined content item containing content from a search result and content from an advertisement that is related to the search based on being associated with the same brand. For example, the user may be more likely to click on or otherwise interact with a search result if the search result contains advertisement information and other interesting features that may entice the user to interact with the search result in some way.

For situations in which the systems discussed here collect and/or use personal information about users, the users may be provided with an opportunity to enable/disable or control programs or features that may collect and/or use personal information (e.g., information about a user's social network, social actions or activities, a user's preferences or a user's current location). In addition, certain data may be treated in one or more ways before it is stored or used, so that personally identifiable information associated with the user is removed. For example, a user's identity may be anonymized so that no personally identifiable information can be determined for the user, or a user's geographic location may be generalized where location information is obtained (such as to a city, ZIP code, or state level), so that a particular location of a user cannot be determined.

FIG. 2A shows an example system **200** for creating a combined content item using information from a content item associated with a same brand. While the example discussed refers to same brand, the system can be used for creating combined content items for other entities. The content management system **110** can provide a combined content item **202** to be presented as a search result entry **204a** along with other search results **204**. The combined content item **202**, for example, can include content from a first search result **214a** (responsive to the search query **206**) that is combined with content from a content item **216a** (also selected based at least in part on the search query **206**). A more detailed example follows using an example sequence of stages 1-5.

At stage 1, the content management system **110**, for example, can receive a search query **206** (e.g., "shoes") from the user device **106**. In some implementations, the search query **206** can be received by the request handler **124**. The search query **206** can include one or more terms or phrases and can be entered, for example, by a user **208** in a query control **210** on a web page **212**. Other sources of the search query **206** are possible, and the search query **206** can include other selection criteria, e.g., based on the user's location, interests, device type, and/or other criteria.

At stage 2, the content identification engine **121**, for example, can identify search results **214** that are responsive to the search query **206**. The identified search results **214** can be obtained, for example, using an index such as described above with reference to FIG. 1. The identified search results **214** can include the first search result **214a**, e.g., that is associated with Example Brand shoes. In some implementations, the first search result can be associated with the brand (e.g., Example Brand) by being a product or retailer of the brand (e.g., Example Brand shoes or a store at which the shoes can be purchased). The identified search results **214** can also include other search results that may be associated with the same brand, other different brands, or no brand at all. Some search results can be associated with multiple brands.

At stage 3, the content identification engine **121**, for example, can also identify eligible content items **216**, such as advertisements or other sponsored content, that are to be presented with the search results **214** and that are selected, based at least in part, on the search query **206**. The identification can also be based on the search query **206** and other information and/or signals (e.g., the user's current location) that are received from the user device **106** or otherwise derived. The eligible content items **216** that are identified can include, for example, a content item **216a** that is one of at least one advertisement for Example Brand shoes. The eligible content items **216** can also include, for example, other advertisements for brands that are different from Example Brand.

At stage 4, the entity/brand determination engine **122**, for example, can determine (**218**), when at least one of the eligible content items **216** is associated with a same brand as the brand associated with the first search result **214a**. The determination **218** can be made, for example, using brand information accessed from brands **132**. The entity/brand determination engine **122**, for example, can make a determination as to whether one or more of the eligible content items **216** is associated with a same brand (e.g., Example Brand shoes) as the first search result **214a**. For example, the entity/brand determination engine **122** can determine that content item **216a**, e.g., an advertisement for Example Brand shoes, is associated with Example Brand shoes. In some implementations, determining that a search result (or content item) is associated with a brand can include using one or more terms,

text or other information from the search result (or content item) to look up corresponding brand names in the brands **132**.

At stage 5, the first search result and one of the determined at least one eligible content items are combined into a combined content item, and the combined content item is provided as a search result responsive to the request (**310**). For example, the content item combination engine **123** can create the combined content item **202** (e.g., a single unit presentable with search results) that is a combination of the first search result **214a** and the content item **216a**, both of which are associated with the same brand (e.g., Example Brand shoes). In some implementations, a different (e.g., non-first) search result can be combined with the at least one eligible content items into a combined content item.

In some implementations, different factors can be used to decide what information to include in a combined content item. For example, content sponsors **108** may have preferences and/or priorities as to which features of content items are to be included, e.g., images, location information, user reviews, and other information. In some implementations, the content selected to create the combined content item can depend, at least in part, on the device type of the user associated with the query (e.g., search query **206**), e.g., so as to produce a combined content item that is fully viewable on the screen of whatever device the user currently has.

The request handler **124**, for example, can provide the combined content item **202** to the user device **106** in response to the received search query **206**. The combined content item **202** can be displayed, for example, as the search result entry **204a**, e.g., the first search result among the search results **204**.

FIG. 2B shows an example combined content item. For example, in response to the search query **206** (e.g., “shoes”) entered in the query control **210**, the content management system **110** has provided the search result entry **204a** as the first entry among the search results **204**. Search results **204** also include other search results **204b**. The search result entry **204a** in this example is a combined content item that includes content **204c** from a search result (e.g., related Example Brand shoes) matching the search query **206**. In this example, the content **204c** for the search result includes a title **223**, a landing page link **226**, and a snippet **225**. The content **204c** has been combined into a combined content item (e.g., the search result entry **204a**) using content from the content item **216a**, (e.g., an advertisement for Example Brand shoes).

In the example shown, the search result entry **204a** is a combined content item that includes, from the content item **216a**, an advertisement image **220**, a visual URL **222**, text **224**, the landing page link **226**, a map **227**, a physical address **228**, business hours **229**, review information **230**, controls **232** (e.g., for obtaining map directions or writing a review), and retailer information **234**. Other types and formats of content can be included in a combined content item, including, for example, audio, video, animation, content obtained from social networks, and other content.

FIG. 3 is a flowchart of an example process **300** for creating a combined content item using information from a content item associated with a same brand. In some implementations, the content management system **110** can perform stages of the process **300** using instructions that are executed by one or more processors. FIGS. 1-2B are used to provide example structures for performing the stages of the process **300**.

A search query is received (**302**). For example, the request handler **124** can receive the search query **206** (e.g., “shoes”) from the user device **106**. The search query **206**, for example, can be entered by the user **208** in a query control **210** on the web page **212**.

Search results responsive to the query are identified, including identifying a first search result in a top set of search results that is associated with a brand (**304**). For example, the content identification engine **121** can identify search results **214** that are responsive to terms and phrases in the search query **206**. The identified search results **214** can be obtained, for example, using an index, such as described above with reference to FIG. 1. The identified search results **214** can include the first search result **214a**, e.g., that is associated with Example Brand shoes. The identified search results **214** can also include other search results that may be associated with the same brand, other different brands, or no brand at all. In some implementations, the first search result (e.g., first search result **214a**) that is identified can be the top search result, e.g., the first entry of the search results **118** that are responsive to the query **116**. In some implementations, the first search result can be a search results entry that is not the top result (e.g., a second result, or a different result on a same page).

Based at least in part on the query, one or more eligible content items are identified for delivery along with the search results responsive to the query (**306**). As an example, the content identification engine **121** can identify eligible content items **216**, such as advertisements or other sponsored content, that are to be presented with the search results **214** and that are selected, at least based in part, on the search query **206**. The advertisements can include, for example, at least one advertisement for Example Brand shoes and other advertisements for brands that are different from Example Brand.

A determination is made when at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand as the brand associated with the first search result (**308**). The entity/brand determination engine **122**, for example, can make a determination as to whether one or more of the eligible content items **216** is associated with a same brand (e.g., Example Brand shoes) as the first search result **214a**. For example, the entity/brand determination engine **122** can determine that content item **216a**, e.g., an advertisement for Example Brand shoes, is associated with Example Brand shoes. There can be other brand-related matches between the eligible content items **216** and other ones of the search results **214**.

In some implementations, determining when the at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand can include determining that one content item is sponsored by an owner of the brand. For example, the entity/brand determination engine **122** can determine that the content item **216a** (e.g., the advertisement for Example Brand shoes) is owned, e.g., by Example Brand Inc., who may also be the content sponsor **108** for the Example Brand shoes advertisement.

In some implementations, determining when at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand can include determining that one eligible content item is associated with a retailer associated with the brand. For example, one or more of the content item **216a** (e.g., the advertisement for Example Brand shoes) and the first search result **214a** can be associated with the same retailer, e.g., a retailer that corresponds to retailer information **234a**.

The first search result and one of the determined at least one eligible content items are combined into a combined content item, and the combined content item is provided as a search result responsive to the request (**310**). For example, the content item combination engine **123** can create the combined content item **202** (e.g., a single unit presentable with search results) that is a combination of the first search result **214a** and the content item **216a** that are both associated with the same Example Brand shoes brand.

In some implementations, combining includes combining a visual universal resource locator (VisURL), a title, text from the determined one eligible content item, or a link to a landing page from the determined one eligible content item into the combined content item. For example, the combined content item **202** that is created by the content item combination engine **123** can include the visual URL **222**, text **224** and a landing page link **226**. The combined content item **202** can also include content **204c**, which can include some or all of the first search result **214a**. In some implementations, there can be some overlap of content in the first search result **214a** and the content item **216a**, such as the same link to a same landing page. In some implementations, duplicative information is not included in a combined content item.

In some implementations, combining can include combining other information associated with the brand in the combination content item. For example, the combined content item **202** can also include a map **227** to one or more retail locations associated with brand retail presence, retailer information **234** associated with the brand and that can provide actionable links for retailers of, or associated with, the brand (e.g., Example Brand shoes). Other information can also be included, such as a physical address **228**, business hours **229**, and rating information **230**. In some implementations, the other information that is combined can also include one or more of: an image or logo associated with the brand, one or more products associated with the brand, or additional links associated with the brand.

In some implementations, combining can include designating content from the at least one eligible content item that is included in the combined content item as sponsored content. For example, the content item combination engine **123** can specify that the combined content item **202** be sponsored content that is included with the search results **204**.

In some implementations, combined content items can be presented in a way that indicates at least a partial sponsorship. For example, combined content items can be presented for display using a special font, a special block, a different background, or some other visual different from other content items.

In some implementations, combining can include combining additional links relevant to the result. For example, two or more site links associated with Example Brand can be consolidated into a single site link.

While discussion above is directed to brands, the methods and system disclosed are applicable to other entities. For example, the identified search results can be associated with a museum, a place, or some other non-brand entity.

FIG. 4 is a block diagram of example computing devices **400**, **450** that may be used to implement the systems and methods described in this document, as either a client or as a server or plurality of servers. Computing device **400** is intended to represent various forms of digital computers, such as laptops, desktops, workstations, personal digital assistants, servers, blade servers, mainframes, and other appropriate computers. Computing device **400** is further intended to represent any other typically non-mobile devices, such as televisions or other electronic devices with one or more processors embedded therein or attached thereto. Computing device **450** is intended to represent various forms of mobile devices, such as personal digital assistants, cellular telephones, smartphones, and other computing devices. The components shown here, their connections and relationships, and their functions, are meant to be examples only, and are not meant to limit implementations of the inventions described and/or claimed in this document.

In some implementations, the process **300** can further include monetizing interactions with material that is included from the at least one eligible content item that is included in the combined content item based on user interactions with the material. For example, once the combined content item **202** is provided as the search result entry **204a**, the content management system **110** can monetize the search result entry **204a** as if it is the same content item **202**. In some implementations, the monetization can occur at a different rate (e.g., a special combined content item rate) than a standard rate that would apply to the content item **216a**.

Computing device **400** includes a processor **402**, memory **404**, a storage device **406**, a high-speed controller **408** connecting to memory **404** and high-speed expansion ports **410**, and a low-speed controller **412** connecting to low-speed bus **414** and storage device **406**. Each of the components **402**, **404**, **406**, **408**, **410**, and **412**, are interconnected using various busses, and may be mounted on a common motherboard or in other manners as appropriate. The processor **402** can process instructions for execution within the computing device **400**, including instructions stored in the memory **404** or on the storage device **406** to display graphical information for a GUI on an external input/output device, such as display **416** coupled to high-speed controller **408**. In other implementations, multiple processors and/or multiple buses may be used, as appropriate, along with multiple memories and types of memory. Also, multiple computing devices **400** may be connected, with each device providing portions of the necessary operations (e.g., as a server bank, a group of blade servers, or a multi-processor system).

The memory **404** stores information within the computing device **400**. In one implementation, the memory **404** is a computer-readable medium. In one implementation, the memory **404** is a volatile memory unit or units. In another implementation, the memory **404** is a non-volatile memory unit or units.

The storage device **406** is capable of providing mass storage for the computing device **400**. In one implementation, the storage device **406** is a computer-readable medium. In various different implementations, the storage device **406** may be a floppy disk device, a hard disk device, an optical disk device, or a tape device, a flash memory or other similar solid state memory device, or an array of devices, including devices in a storage area network or other configurations. In one implementation, a computer program product is tangibly embodied in an information carrier. The computer program product contains instructions that, when executed, perform one or more methods, such as those described above. The information carrier is a computer- or machine-readable medium, such as the memory **404**, the storage device **406**, or memory on processor **402**.

The high-speed controller **408** manages bandwidth-intensive operations for the computing device **400**, while the low-speed controller **412** manages lower bandwidth-intensive operations. Such allocation of duties is an example only. In one implementation, the high-speed controller **408** is coupled to memory **404**, display **416** (e.g., through a graphics processor or accelerator), and to high-speed expansion ports **410**, which may accept various expansion cards (not shown). In the implementation, low-speed controller **412** is coupled to storage device **406** and low-speed bus **414**. The low-speed bus **414** (e.g., a low-speed expansion port), which may include various communication ports (e.g., USB, Bluetooth®, Ethernet, wireless Ethernet), may be coupled to one or more input/output devices, such as a keyboard, a pointing device, a scanner, or a networking device such as a switch or router, e.g., through a network adapter.

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The computing device **400** may be implemented in a number of different forms, as shown in the figure. For example, it may be implemented as a standard server **420**, or multiple times in a group of such servers. It may also be implemented as part of a rack server system **424**. In addition, it may be implemented in a personal computer such as a laptop computer **422**. Alternatively, components from computing device **400** may be combined with other components in a mobile device (not shown), such as computing device **450**. Each of such devices may contain one or more of computing devices **400**, **450**, and an entire system may be made up of multiple computing devices **400**, **450** communicating with each other.

Computing device **450** includes a processor **452**, memory **464**, an input/output device such as a display **454**, a communication interface **466**, and a transceiver **468**, among other components. The computing device **450** may also be provided with a storage device, such as a micro-drive or other device, to provide additional storage. Each of the components **450**, **452**, **464**, **454**, **466**, and **468**, are interconnected using various buses, and several of the components may be mounted on a common motherboard or in other manners as appropriate.

The processor **452** can process instructions for execution within the computing device **450**, including instructions stored in the memory **464**. The processor may also include separate analog and digital processors. The processor may provide, for example, for coordination of the other components of the computing device **450**, such as control of user interfaces, applications run by computing device **450**, and wireless communication by computing device **450**.

Processor **452** may communicate with a user through control interface **458** and display interface **456** coupled to a display **454**. The display **454** may be, for example, a TFT LCD display or an OLED display, or other appropriate display technology. The display interface **456** may comprise appropriate circuitry for driving the display **454** to present graphical and other information to a user. The control interface **458** may receive commands from a user and convert them for submission to the processor **452**. In addition, an external interface **462** may be provided in communication with processor **452**, so as to enable near area communication of computing device **450** with other devices. External interface **462** may provide, for example, for wired communication (e.g., via a docking procedure) or for wireless communication (e.g., via Bluetooth® or other such technologies).

The memory **464** stores information within the computing device **450**. In one implementation, the memory **464** is a computer-readable medium. In one implementation, the memory **464** is a volatile memory unit or units. In another implementation, the memory **464** is a non-volatile memory unit or units. Expansion memory **474** may also be provided and connected to computing device **450** through expansion interface **472**, which may include, for example, a subscriber identification module (SIM) card interface. Such expansion memory **474** may provide extra storage space for computing device **450**, or may also store applications or other information for computing device **450**. Specifically, expansion memory **474** may include instructions to carry out or supplement the processes described above, and may include secure information also. Thus, for example, expansion memory **474** may be provide as a security module for computing device **450**, and may be programmed with instructions that permit secure use of computing device **450**. In addition, secure applications may be provided via the SIM cards, along with additional information, such as placing identifying information on the SIM card in a non-hackable manner.

The memory may include for example, flash memory and/or MRAM memory, as discussed below. In one implementa-

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tion, a computer program product is tangibly embodied in an information carrier. The computer program product contains instructions that, when executed, perform one or more methods, such as those described above. The information carrier is a computer- or machine-readable medium, such as the memory **464**, expansion memory **474**, or memory on processor **452**.

Computing device **450** may communicate wirelessly through communication interface **466**, which may include digital signal processing circuitry where necessary. Communication interface **466** may provide for communications under various modes or protocols, such as GSM voice calls, SMS, EMS, or MMS messaging, CDMA, TDMA, PDC, WCDMA, CDMA2000, or GPRS, among others. Such communication may occur, for example, through transceiver **468** (e.g., a radio-frequency transceiver). In addition, short-range communication may occur, such as using a Bluetooth®, WiFi, or other such transceiver (not shown). In addition, GPS receiver module **470** may provide additional wireless data to computing device **450**, which may be used as appropriate by applications running on computing device **450**.

Computing device **450** may also communicate audibly using audio codec **460**, which may receive spoken information from a user and convert it to usable digital information. Audio codec **460** may likewise generate audible sound for a user, such as through a speaker, e.g., in a handset of computing device **450**. Such sound may include sound from voice telephone calls, may include recorded sound (e.g., voice messages, music files, etc.) and may also include sound generated by applications operating on computing device **450**.

The computing device **450** may be implemented in a number of different forms, as shown in the figure. For example, it may be implemented as a cellular telephone **480**. It may also be implemented as part of a smartphone **482**, personal digital assistant, or other mobile device.

Various implementations of the systems and techniques described here can be realized in digital electronic circuitry, integrated circuitry, specially designed ASICs (application specific integrated circuits), computer hardware, firmware, software, and/or combinations thereof. These various implementations can include implementation in one or more computer programs that are executable and/or interpretable on a programmable system including at least one programmable processor, which may be special or general purpose, coupled to receive data and instructions from, and to transmit data and instructions to, a storage system, at least one input device, and at least one output device.

These computer programs (also known as programs, software, software applications or code) include machine instructions for a programmable processor, and can be implemented in a high-level procedural and/or object-oriented programming language, and/or in assembly/machine language. Other programming paradigms can be used, e.g., functional programming, logical programming, or other programming. As used herein, the terms “machine-readable medium” “computer-readable medium” refers to any computer program product, apparatus and/or device (e.g., magnetic discs, optical disks, memory, Programmable Logic Devices (PLDs)) used to provide machine instructions and/or data to a programmable processor, including a machine-readable medium that receives machine instructions as a machine-readable signal. The term “machine-readable signal” refers to any signal used to provide machine instructions and/or data to a programmable processor.

To provide for interaction with a user, the systems and techniques described here can be implemented on a computer having a display device (e.g., a CRT (cathode ray tube) or

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LCD (liquid crystal display) monitor) for displaying information to the user and a keyboard and a pointing device (e.g., a mouse or a trackball) by which the user can provide input to the computer. Other kinds of devices can be used to provide for interaction with a user as well; for example, feedback 5 provided to the user can be any form of sensory feedback (e.g., visual feedback, auditory feedback, or tactile feedback); and input from the user can be received in any form, including acoustic, speech, or tactile input.

The systems and techniques described here can be implemented in a computing system that includes a back end component (e.g., as a data server), or that includes a middleware component (e.g., an application server), or that includes a front end component (e.g., a client computer having a graphical user interface or a Web browser through which a user can 15 interact with an implementation of the systems and techniques described here), or any combination of such back end, middleware, or front end components. The components of the system can be interconnected by any form or medium of digital data communication (e.g., a communication network). Examples of communication networks include a local area network ("LAN"), a wide area network ("WAN"), and the Internet.

The computing system can include clients and servers. A client and server are generally remote from each other and typically interact through a communication network. The relationship of client and server arises by virtue of computer programs running on the respective computers and having a client-server relationship to each other. 25

While this specification contains many specific implementation details, these should not be construed as limitations on the scope of any inventions or of what may be claimed, but rather as descriptions of features specific to particular implementations of particular inventions. Certain features that are described in this specification in the context of separate 35 implementations can also be implemented in combination in a single implementation. Conversely, various features that are described in the context of a single implementation can also be implemented in multiple implementations separately or in any suitable subcombination. Moreover, although features may be described above as acting in certain combinations and even initially claimed as such, one or more features from a claimed combination can in some cases be excised from the combination, and the claimed combination may be directed to a subcombination or variation of a subcombination. 45

Similarly, while operations are depicted in the drawings in a particular order, this should not be understood as requiring that such operations be performed in the particular order shown or in sequential order, or that all illustrated operations be performed, to achieve desirable results. In certain circumstances, multitasking and parallel processing may be advantageous. Moreover, the separation of various system components in the implementations described above should not be understood as requiring such separation in all implementations, and it should be understood that the described program 55 components and systems can generally be integrated together in a single software product or packaged into multiple software products.

Thus, particular implementations of the subject matter have been described. Other implementations are within the scope of the following claims. In some cases, the actions recited in the claims can be performed in a different order and still achieve desirable results. In addition, the processes depicted in the accompanying figures do not necessarily require the particular order shown, or sequential order, to achieve desirable results. In certain implementations, multitasking and parallel processing may be advantageous. 60

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The invention claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented method comprising:
 - receiving a search query;
 - identifying search results responsive to the query, including identifying a first search result in a top set of search results that is associated with a first brand;
 - determining the first brand associated with the first search result;
 - based at least in part on the query, identifying one or more eligible content items for delivery along with the search results responsive to the query;
 - determining a second brand associated with at least one of the eligible content items;
 - comparing the first and second brands, and when the first and second brands are the same, creating a combined content item, the combined content item being a single display unit including at least a portion of the first search result and at least a portion of content from the first eligible content item, wherein the respective portions are less than an entire portion of content and being presented along with other search results responsive to the search query, wherein creating further includes determining content sponsor preferences associated with a content sponsor of the first eligible content item, the content sponsor preferences including one or more specifications for how to combine the first eligible content item with the first search result, and wherein creating further includes generating the combined content item in accordance with the content sponsor preferences; and
 - providing the combined content item as a search result responsive to the request.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the first search result is the top search result.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein determining when the at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand includes determining that one content item is sponsored by an owner of the brand.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein combining includes combining a visual universal resource locator (VisURL), a title, text from the determined one eligible content item and a link to a landing page from the determined one eligible content item into the combined content item.
5. The method of claim 1 further comprising combining other information associated with the brand in the combination content item.
6. The method of claim 5 wherein other information includes a map to retail locations associated with brand retail presence.
7. The method of claim 5 wherein other information includes retail location information associated with the brand.
8. The method of claim 5 wherein the other information includes an image or logo associated with the brand.
9. The method of claim 5 wherein the other information includes one or more products associated with the brand.
10. The method of claim 5 wherein the other information includes additional links associated with the brand.
11. The method of claim 1 wherein the first search result is not the top result.
12. The method of claim 1 wherein determining when at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand includes determining that one eligible content item is associated with a retailer associated with the brand.
13. The method of claim 1 wherein combining includes designating content from the at least one eligible content item that is included in the combined content item as sponsored content. 65

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14. The method of claim 1 further comprising monetizing interactions with material that is included from the at least one eligible content item that is included in the combined content item based on user interactions with the material.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein the first search result is associated with the brand by being a product or retailer of the brand.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein combining includes combining additional links relevant to the result.

17. A non-transitive computer-readable medium including instructions, that when executed, cause one or more processors to:

receive a search query;

identify search results responsive to the query, including identifying a first search result in a top set of search results that is associated with a first brand;

determine the first brand associated with the first search result;

based at least in part on the query, identify one or more eligible content items for delivery along with the search results responsive to the query;

determine a second brand associated with at least one of the eligible content items;

compare the first and second brands, and when the first and second brands are the same, create a combined content item, the combined content item being a single display unit including at least a portion of the first search result and at least a portion of content from the first eligible content item, wherein the respective portions are less than an entire portion of content and being presented along with other search results responsive to the search query, wherein creating further includes determining content sponsor preferences associated with a content sponsor of the first eligible content item, the content sponsor preferences including one or more specifications for how to combine the first eligible content item with the first search result, and wherein creating further includes generating the combined content item in accordance with the content sponsor preferences; and

provide the combined content item as a search result responsive to the request.

18. A system comprising:

a content identification engine that evaluates terms and phrases in a received query to identify content responsive to the request;

an entity/brand determination engine that determines when at least one of the eligible content items identified by the content identification engine is associated with a same

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entity/brand as the entity/brand associated with the first search result of the search results;

a content item combination engine that combines a first search result and one of the determined at least one eligible content items into a combined content item;

a request handler that handles requests for content received by the content management system;

a request handler that handles requests for content received by a content management system, the content management system selecting and providing content in response to requests for content;

one or more processors; and

one or more memory elements including instructions that, when executed, cause the one or more processors to:

receive a search query;

identify search results responsive to the query, including identifying a first search result in a top set of search results that is associated with a first brand;

determine the first brand associated with the first search result;

based at least in part on the query, identify one or more eligible content items for delivery along with the search results responsive to the query;

determine a second brand associated with at least one of the eligible content items;

compare the first and second brands, and when the first and second brands are the same, create a combined content item, the combined content item being a single display unit including at least a portion of the first search result and at least a portion of content from the first eligible content item, wherein the respective portions are less than an entire portion of content and being presented along with other search results responsive to the search query, wherein creating further includes determining content sponsor preferences associated with a content sponsor of the first eligible content item, the content sponsor preferences including one or more specifications for how to combine the first eligible content item with the first search result, and wherein creating further includes generating the combined content item in accordance with the content sponsor preferences; and

provide the combined content item as a search result responsive to the request.

19. The system of claim 18 wherein determining when the at least one of the eligible content items is associated with a same brand includes determining that one content item is sponsored by an owner of the brand.

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